

at the excess of modesty with which the age is afflicted, have endeavoured to diminish the evil, by presenting themselves before the public in their narratives, in a manner very analogous to that in which the Lady Godiva is said to have consented, from a most generous inducement, to pass through the city of Coventry. They can gravely relate, perhaps with intermingled paragraphs and verses of plaintive sensibility, (a kind of weeds in which sentiment without principle apes and mocks mourning virtue,) the whole nauseous detail of their transitions from proprietor to proprietor. They can tell of the precautions for meeting some "illustrious personage," accomplished in depravity even in his early youth, with the proper adjustment of time and circumstances to save him the scandal of such a meeting; the hour when they crossed the river in a boat; the arrangements about money; the kindness of the "personage" at one time, his contemptuous neglect at another; and everything else that can turn the compassion with which we deplore their first misfortunes and errors, into detestation of the effrontery which can take to itself a merit in proclaiming the commencement, sequel, and all, to the wide world.

With regard to all the classes of self-describers who thus think the publication of their vices necessary to crown their fame, one should wish there were some public special mark and brand of emphatic reprobation, to reward this tribute to public morals. Men that court the pillory for the pleasure of it, ought to receive the honour of it too, in all those contumelious salutations which suit the merits of vice grown proud of its impudence. They who "glory in their shame" should, like other distinguished personages, "pay a tax for being eminent." Yet I own the public itself is to be consulted in this case; for if the public welcomes such productions, it shows there are readers who feel themselves akin to the writers, and it would be hard to deprive congenial souls of the luxury of their appropriate sympathies. If such is the taste, it proves that a considerable portion of the public deserves just that kind of respect for its virtue, which is very significantly implied in this confidence of its favour.

One is indignant at the cant pretence and title of Confessions, sometimes adopted by these exhibitors of their own disgrace; as if it were to be believed, that penitence and humiliation would ever excite men to

call thousands to